

Involvement of Students in Research Project Implementation: evidence from pilot action in Lithuania

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Extended Abstract: The importance of ICT in supporting citizens' involvement in various policy development processes is becoming extremely important. ICT provides variety of tools and techniques enabling active involvement in of citizens.

Current paper explores involvement of students in pilot actions of EC supported WAVE initiative. Project WAVE aims to improve the inclusiveness and transparency of EU decision making at the national and European level by employing an Argument Visualization tool (namely Debategraph) in order to make the impact of complex EU environmental legislation on climate change more accessible and easy to understand for citizens, special interest groups and decision makers alike.

The WAVE platform and Debategraph tool were localized and piloted through two stages in three countries – France, Lithuania and United Kingdom. The piloting team tested various techniques engaging users and pilot results allowed identify key aspects of argument visualization tools deployment.

The most successful piloting of WAVE platform was performed in Lithuania. Closed user group pilot was aiming to verify users understanding and acceptance of WAVE platform in order to improve it preparing for large scale pilot.

Open user group was aiming to deploy WAVE portal at large and attract at least 2000 user for the discussion. The open pilot (www.wave-diskusijos.lt) was jointly launched on the 22nd of April 2010 following the consortium decision to start open pilot phase on the International Earth Day.

The set of various users attracting and engagement tactics was used to achieve pilot targets such as face to face meetings with industry representatives, NGOs, activist and policy makers; press releases, feedback reports, reminding emails; AdWords campaign; Facebook campaigns on related topics pages; cooperation with local news portals.

Students were involved in various activities in both closed and open groups' pilot stages during pilot implementation in Lithuania.

The results of successful piloting in Lithuania describing pilot structure and student involvement actions will be discussed in this paper.